

## Disproportionality in school discipline: An assessment in Maryland through 2018

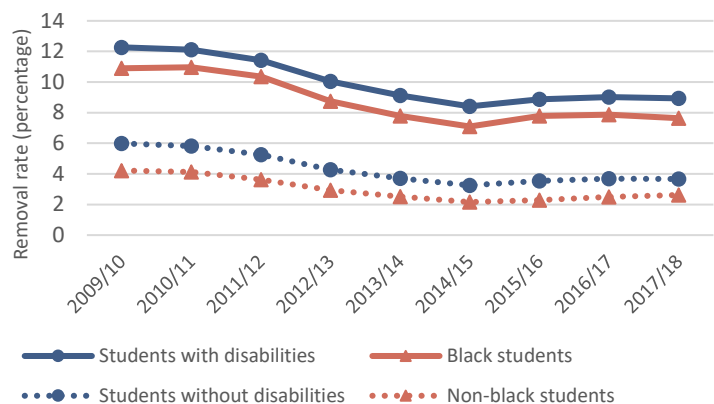
In Maryland, differences in disciplinary removal rates between Black students and non-Black students, and between students with and without disabilities, are comparable to national gaps. To address these persistent disparities in disciplinary removal rates,<sup>1</sup> the Maryland State Board of Education adopted policies to ensure that disciplinary removals are considered a last resort and, when used, are applied equitably. The State Board directed the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to reduce disproportionality in school discipline for minority subgroups and students in special education.<sup>2</sup> As part of this effort, MSDE developed a measure to identify schools that exhibit disproportionality in school discipline.

Understanding Maryland’s recent trends in disciplinary removals and disproportionality will inform MSDE’s efforts to reliably measure and reduce disproportionality in its schools. The information provided in the report can also inform MSDE’s approach to supporting districts and schools as they create and implement action plans to address disproportionality in school discipline. The report uses descriptive analyses and tests of statistical significance, including a fixed-effects regression model to examine trends in disciplinary removals in Maryland from the 2009/10 through 2017/18 school years by student subgroup, and applies MSDE’s definition of discipline disproportionality to identify and compare disproportionate and non-disproportionate schools.

### Key findings

- Exclusionary discipline rates declined for all subgroups of students in Maryland over the past decade; however, Black students and students with disabilities continued to be suspended and expelled from school at more than twice the rates of other students.
- Even when they were involved in the same types of infractions, Black students and students with disabilities were significantly more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions than other subgroups.

Statewide disciplinary removal rates of selected subgroups



Source: These rates were generated from the Suspensions, Expulsions, and Health Related Exclusions Maryland Public Schools reports for 2009/10 through 2017/18; the Maryland Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Gender and Number of Schools files for 2009/10 through 2017/18; and the Maryland Special Education/Early Intervention Services Census Data and Related Tables files for 2009/10 through 2017/18.

<sup>1</sup> Porowski, O’Conner, & Passa, 2014

<sup>2</sup> Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.08.01.21